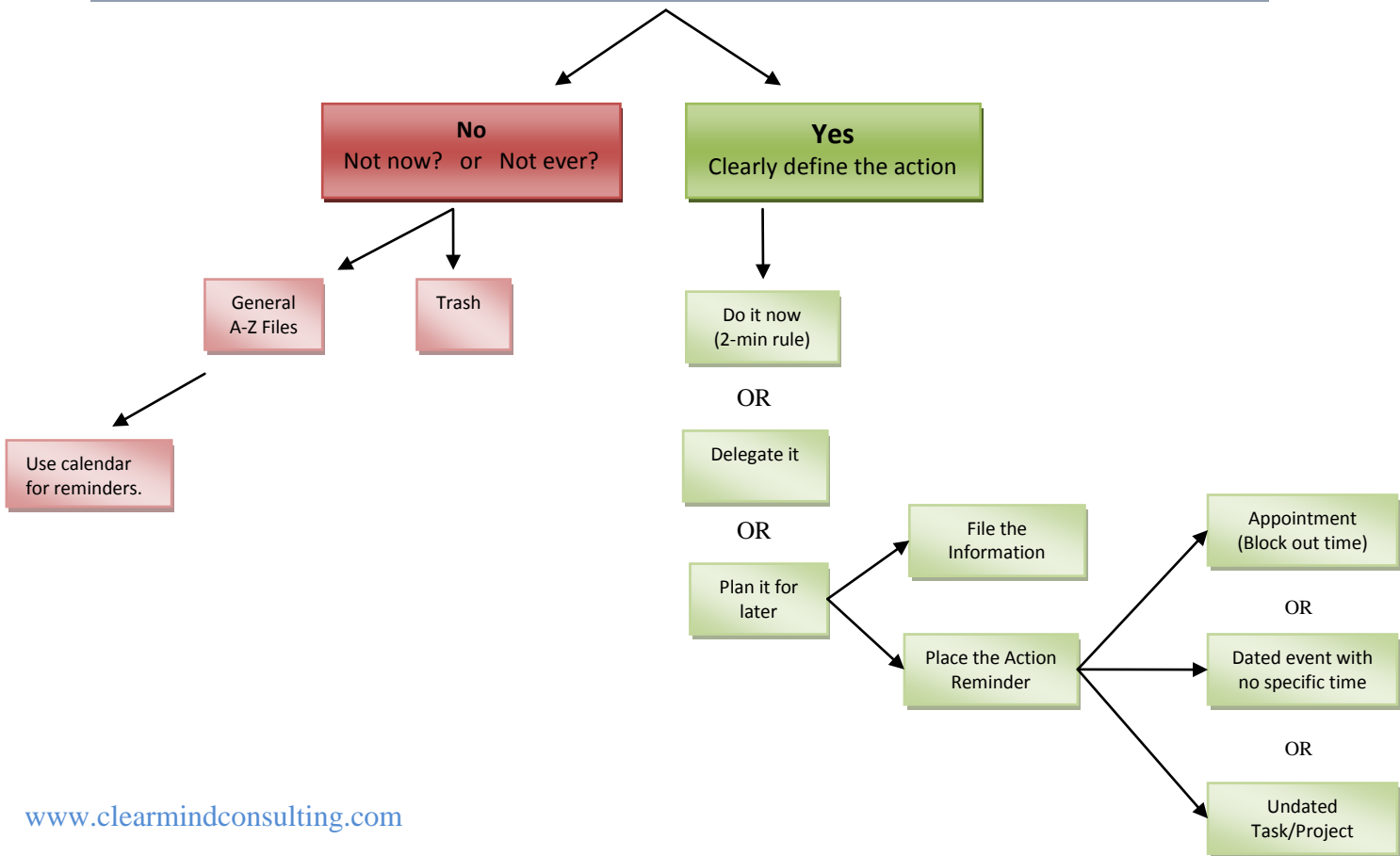
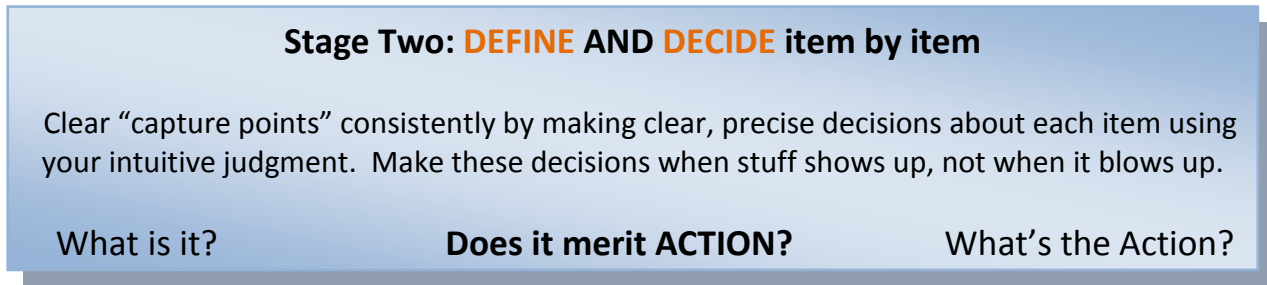
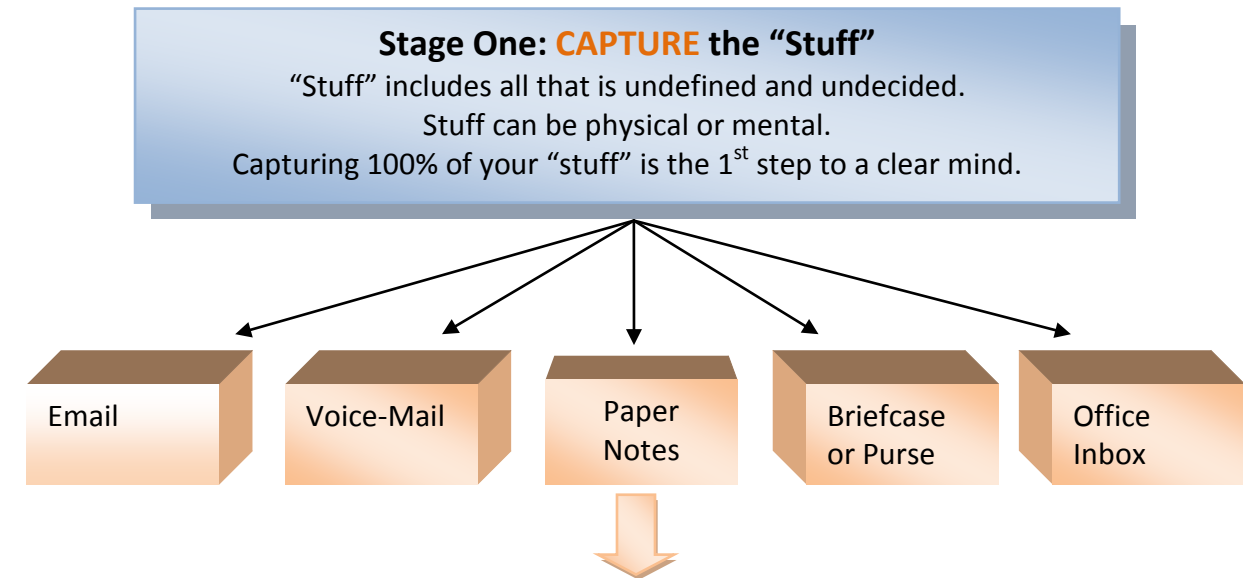




CLEARMIND CONSULTING

A clutter-control strategy for sustained success in the new world of work





Your Clutter Control System

Clutter zaps your energy and distracts your focus.

We are exposed to 10 times more information than just 5 years ago – and this trend is accelerating.

Many people work in a state of constant distraction – this has become “normal”

The concept of “multi-tasking” does not deliver the expected results – often too much time is invested in trivial or “urgent” work that does not move us toward our goals.

Controlling the clutter in your world is possible, with a few simple tools.

Clutter takes two forms – physical and mental

Physical clutter – any item that is not in its designated home.

- The dirty laundry on the floor, not in the hamper
- The sticky note on the computer screen, not entered in our planner
- The piles of paper on our desk, not filed away

Physical clutter drains our energy through constant **visual distraction**.

The keys to dealing with physical clutter are

- 1) Quickly and clearly decide what to do about, or with, the item
- 2) Decide the “home” for that type of item
- 3) Communicate your decisions to your staff/family

Mental Clutter – any thought, idea, or commitment that exists only in your mind.

- I’ll remember to call her back on Friday
- I’ll remember to do that when I get home
- I’ll remember to...

Mental clutter leads to frustrating and distracting “**mental chatter**.”

The keys to dealing with mental clutter are:

- 1) Make crystal-clear decisions about your required action when “stuff” shows up.
- 2) Articulate those commitments with precise language in a system you trust



“Stuff” shows up

(emails, phone calls, ideas, mail, client requests, etc.)

And it’s your job to **convert stuff into information and action.**

Here’s how you do it.

- 1) Capture
- 2) Clear
- 3) Complete

1) Capture: **Herding the Stuff**

The capture stage is about **collecting all of the “stuff” all of the time.** That’s 100%
We’re not filtering the important from the junk at this point, that’s step two. We just need to set up enough “capture points” in our world so that we can capture 100% quickly and easily.

My “capture points” are my email inbox – my physical desk inbox – my briefcase – my voicemail – and my planner. You’ll notice that two of these capture points (email and voicemail) are “automated,” such that the new “stuff” is automatically captured by the system.

So no matter where I am, no matter what I’m doing I can collect 100% of the stuff in one of these places to be cleared later.

Today’s exercise will be to set up these “collection points” in your world. We know you are already collecting in ...

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Now, collecting 100% will clear your mind, but it will only stay clear if you “clear” the collection points... That’s step 2.



2) Clear: **Making Crystal-Clear Decisions**

In the decide phase you will **convert “stuff” into action and information** by answering a few simple questions.

Question One: “What is this?”

This is not a dumb question, most people don’t define the “stuff”

Question Two: “What action (if any) do I need to take?”

In the ClearMind system there are only 5 places where “stuff” is going to end up.

If the answer to the “action” question is NO...

- 1) Trash (I’m not committed to taking action now and I never will)
- 2) File (I’m not deciding to act now but I might want to later)

Now, more importantly, **if the answer is YES** then we now have one of 3 things.

- 1) A calendar item (meet Matthew next Wednesday at 9:15 am)
- 2) A task (call Betsy when the new site is finished)
- 3) A Project (complete the ABC school site project)

That’s it. That’s how we keep the “collection points” clear – until tomorrow when they fill up again

But that’s the point – we’re filling up our collection points and clearing our minds.



3) Complete

When we say YES to an action we apply the 3-D method

- 1) **Do it.** (if it takes just a minute or two don't even write it down, just do it)
- 2) **Delegate it.** (Leverage the talents and time of other people to accomplish the task)
- 3) **Defer it.** (We can't do it now, we can't delegate it, so we need to use our planner to remind us to do it later)

We are always "in action" in one of 3 modes – all are OK and necessary – we'll talk more about this later.

- 1) Doing work as it shows up (60% of your average day)
- 2) Doing work that you've planned (30% of your average day)
- 3) Planning your work (The essential 10% that delivers the clear mind)

Use the system and trust the system – even when you don't feel like it.

The first thing you'll notice is that you have a lot more pending promises than you thought. Don't get overwhelmed, take it step by step and don't let that inner terrorist win!